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*Office Memorandum* • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : General W.B. SMITH

DATE: 1 December

FROM : 

SUBJECT:

The original of this letter is being forwarded through the chain of command. I am forwarding this copy direct in the hope that I may have an opportunity for a personal interview with the Director.

Very respectfully,

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Acting Chief, Maritime Training Branch

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*I talked with  
him feeling much better.*

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26 November 1952

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FROM: [REDACTED]

TO : Director of Central Intelligence

VIA : Director of Training

SUBJ: Central Intelligence Agency, Comments concerning

1. On 25 August 1952 I reported to this Agency from a background of 16 years of naval service, including 3½ years of Naval Intelligence training and experience. I believe, therefore, that I have some understanding of and sympathy for the special problems and difficulties of intelligence work. I came by my own request, strongly motivated by the mission assigned to this Agency, and enthusiastic for the opportunity to contribute toward the fulfillment of this mission.

2. Now, after 3 months, I am leaving the Agency at my own request, thoroughly disillusioned, and with my confidence in the Agency's ability to perform its mission destroyed.

3. My personal problem is relatively unimportant and, in any case, has been solved by my leaving the Agency. Even the fate of the project to which I was assigned, though important, would not justify this letter, if this project were an exception to an otherwise healthy organization. But I believe that my experience was typical enough to indicate that something is seriously wrong with Central Intelligence Agency. In any case, I believe that it may be of some concern to the Director that a service officer, reporting to this Agency at his own request and with considerable motivation, can leave the Agency in 3 months' time completely disillusioned.

4. My comments, from 3 months' experience within one area of this Agency's activities, obviously cannot extend to recommending and blueprinting a corrective program for Central Intelligence Agency. Rather I consider that my comments may serve to show weaknesses which should be considered in planning effective corrective action.

5. My comments follow:

a) Delays in obtaining decisions and action are appalling. This is probably the largest single cause of poor morale and lost motivation in this organization. These delays I would estimate result in no less than 10 times as much lost time as in another

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comparable government

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comparable government organization. And such delays exist appear independent of the type of action or decision required, from an operational decision to the procurement of an item of equipment or the processing of a travel claim. And I believe that the cause is deeper than a merely overworked or inefficient personnel.

b) Each office, division, branch, unit of any kind should have a clearly written mission, stemming initially from the Agency's overall mission. Each unit's mission should be part of and contribute to that of its next superior. And each unit should have a clear understanding of its responsibilities and authority, with goals to conform. This is fundamental to good organization, yet appears to be a basic weakness in this Agency. The delays in getting action or decision, mentioned above, I believe stem largely from uncertainty throughout the Agency as to individual missions, responsibilities, and authorities. Nothing could be more fatal to action. Decisions are "coordinated" and "cooperated" into oblivion when an individual feeling of responsibility for such decisions would undoubtedly produce prompt results. Compartmentation, application of the "need-to-know" security rule, aggravates this Agency weakness. For units operate too much in a vacuum, ignorant as to where they are assuming some other unit's responsibilities, or when and where they should request advice, assistance, or support.

c) Contributing to the paralysis of action, and allied to mission weakness, is evidence that the administrative complex in this Agency is not functioning, as it should in any organization, solely as a support for operations. Instead, administrative decisions, reviews, failures to support, or delays in supporting, in effect result in approval or disapproval of operations. The result of out-of-line administration can only be paralysis and ineffectiveness of operations.

d) There appears to be no standard system of correspondence or filing within the Agency. This is so basic and ordinary a need as to be a prerequisite to improvement elsewhere. A minimum and vitally-needed goal is the capability throughout the Agency for writing letters and memoranda and getting prompt processing in the form of written approvals or disapprovals or other clear indication of action taken. This obviously requires a filing system such that full records and references are readily available.

e) I firmly believe that this Agency could not pass a business-like analysis of its operations, a comparison of production versus expenditure and effort. And I believe that an intelligence organization, like any other Government organization, should be able to pass such a realistic business analysis. Each unit should be analyzed as follows: What is its mission? Responsibility? Authority? Goals? What has it accomplished accordingly, and in what amount of time, and with what effort and expenditure?

f) There is evidence of a lack of long-range planning, so vital to a national intelligence organization.

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g) Personnel morale,

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g) Personnel morale, largely as a result of the above factors, often drops the full scale to an unbelievable low, with resultant loss of once-motivated personnel and conversion of the remainder to frustrated or resigned "workers for a living."

6. I have tried to keep the above commentary as objective as possible. I am fully prepared to support each of my observations from my own limited experience in this Agency. I have no personal objective, either for myself, or against anyone else or any group or activity within this Agency. I have been so appalled at the evidence of the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of this Agency that I consider the submission of this commentary to the Director as a patriotic duty.

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Acting Chief, Maritime Training Branch

MTB/TR(S)/JWP:ahgb

cc: Director of Training

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